

REMARKS

At the outset, the Examiner is thanked for the thorough review and consideration of the subject application. The Office Action of June 28, 2004 has been received and contents carefully reviewed. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 18-20.

By this Amendment, Applicants amend claims 15, 17, 19 and 20, and cancel claim 18 without disclaiming the underlying subject matters. Accordingly, claims 15-17 and 19-22 are currently pending in the present application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 15-16 and 21-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Mitsutake (U.S. Patent No. 6,157,419), and rejected claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mitsutake. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claim 15 is allowable over the cited references in that claim 15 recites a combination of elements including, for example, "a plurality of light valves for selectively transmitting said light, each of said plurality of light valves including a first substrate, a second substrate, and an interposed ferroelectric liquid crystal layer, wherein said interposed ferroelectric liquid crystal layer includes a plurality of first grating portions and a plurality of second grating portions, and the first and second grating portions have polymer networks..." None of the cited references, singly or in combination, teaches or suggests at least this feature of the claimed invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 15 and claims 16, 17 and 19-22, which depend therefrom, are allowable over the cited references.

Applicants believe the foregoing amendments place the application in condition for allowance and early, favorable action is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner deems that a telephone conference would further the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number (202) 496-7500. All correspondence should continue to be sent to the below-listed address.

If these papers are not considered timely filed by the Patent and Trademark Office, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. §1.136, and any additional fees required under 37

C.F.R. §1.136 for any necessary extension of time, or any other fees required to complete the filing of this response, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0911. Please credit any overpayment to deposit Account No. 50-0911.

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Respectfully submitted,

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